

# *Marine Corps Infrastructure*

## *Discussion*

The Marine Corps infrastructure consists of 17 major bases and stations in the United States and Japan. In keeping with the Corps' expeditionary nature, these installations are strategically located near air and sea ports of embarkation, and are serviced by major truck routes and railheads, to allow for the rapid and efficient movement of Marines and material.

Infrastructure development planning is designed to provide facilities for the efficient training of air/ground combat teams while minimizing excess or redundant capacities. The obvious advantages to a lean infrastructure are efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Challenges arise in providing and maintaining infrastructure that can meet changing mission requirements in the face of increasing external pressures and declining fiscal and manpower resources. These challenges include:

❑ ***Environmental Compliance.*** Our Nation has crafted a strong environmental code of conduct structured on a wide range of federal, state, and local laws and strengthened through increased regulatory agency scrutiny and enforcement. Due to the nature of the Marine Corps mission, these requirements present significant challenges. Through inspired leadership at all levels, hard work, Marine tenacity, and the Corps' approach of viewing environmental requirements as a way of doing business, the Corps has made significant strides to achieving its ultimate goal of strict compliance with all applicable environmental requirements while performing its mission. Today, Marines at all levels contribute to environmental goals by simply performing their jobs and being aware of potential environmental impacts. In this era of declining resources, the next challenge is to continue the environmental progress and protect the ability to train and operate while reducing overall costs. Pollution prevention and natural resource management strategies are being pursued to achieve goals.

❑ ***Encroachment Control.*** Once located in remote areas, many Marine installations are now surrounded by urban, industrial, residential and mining development. This growth of the civil sector is often accompanied by pressure for access to Marine resources or demands to curtail Marine operations to make them more compatible with surrounding land uses. Additionally, regulatory requirements such as endangered species protection continue to erode unlimited access to areas needed for training. The Corps maintains an aggressive encroachment control program that has resulted in win-win solutions to meet these demands

while not degrading the mission effectiveness of Marine installations. Encroachment takes many forms and requires constant vigilance to ensure the continued viability of Marine installations and access to the Corps' training ranges.

❑ **Infrastructure Rightsizing.** The Marine Corps U.S. readiness infrastructure investment is more than \$20 billion. Routine maintenance and repair protect this investment through its life cycle, but eventually facilities must be recapitalized. Recapitalization of an infrastructure investment of this magnitude once every 100 years would necessitate a Military Construction, Navy (MCON) funding stream of \$200 million annually. This is not achievable within current or projected budgets. To offset this deficit, the Corps is aggressively pursuing several initiatives to downsize facilities at our bases and stations. The Corps must optimize its infrastructure usage by matching requirements to assets, no more- no less. Computerized master planning is a viable resource in this regard. The Corps is ensuring maximum use of our best infrastructure and reducing its inventory by demolishing its least energy efficient and most maintenance intensive facilities. In addition, it is examining the ways it does business to reduce the need for facilities to support the operating forces; such as, prime vendor delivery of goods instead of maintaining a warehouse of material. The Corps is looking to other services, agencies, and the commercial sector to provide needed facilities. Finally, Marines are taking advantage of recent legislation which provides greater access to public/private ventures, to reduce our requirement for funding for replacement of facilities.

❑ **Base Operating Support (BOS).** Military readiness requires an efficient and well-managed infrastructure with quality facilities and high quality of life features. In addition to capital improvements, The Marine Corps must invest in their long-term operation, maintenance, and repair. Failing to provide adequate resources will result in an eventual degradation of quality of life, operations, and mission accomplishment. Limited funding for BOS must be balanced to keep the backlog of maintenance and repair from growing, comply with environmental requirements, pursue aggressive energy savings programs, and pay for required services. These are the costs associated with responsible ownership. The Marine Corps is working to meet these challenges through a variety of means, including technological and business process changes to increase productivity. They are also exploring new ways to outsource and finance facility requirements and BOS programs require continued visibility and support throughout the budget process.

□ **Civilian Manpower.** Installation management requires a diverse staff possessing skills ranging from the electrical and plumbing trades to professionals trained in environmental science and law. The Marine Corps has actively pursued more efficient business practices, including outsourcing various functions and using low maintenance technologies. This is evidenced by the fact the Marine Corps has the lowest ratio of civilian to military employees within DoD. It continues to examine this area for other efficiencies. Care must be exercised, however, to ensure that reducing civilian personnel does not impact the Corps' ability to provide a sufficiently skilled work force to adequately maintain our infrastructure. Support at all levels is required as this invaluable asset is analyzed.

□ **Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC).** The limited size and lack of redundancy within the Supporting Establishment present certain advantages and disadvantages. The efficiencies associated with a small physical plant strategically located in support of air-ground teams are truly beneficial. During this period of force and base structure reductions, however, finding the means to further reduce infrastructure capacity while providing adequate facilities to meet the needs and maintain the integrity of our MAGTF organizations is difficult. Decisions made during 1995 as part of the last round of base realignments and closures provided the infrastructure blueprint for the Marine Corps into the next century. Implementing these decisions is requiring significant up front costs to achieve long-term economies. New technologies, changes in doctrine and training, a greater focus on jointness, and the fielding of new equipment necessitate continual assessment of capacity requirements and resultant planning for change. Effecting these changes will require the continued commitment at all levels within the DoD and the Congress.

□ **Quality of Life.** Marines are a people intensive service. A Supporting Establishment that helps attract and retain outstanding Marines and Sailors requires a commitment to their quality of life by providing housing, recreational amenities, child care facilities, family services, community support centers, and more. The Corps has significant shortages of adequate housing for both bachelor and married service members. To satisfy the bachelor housing shortages, it will continue to commit a substantial portion of its Military Construction funding to replace all inadequate squad bay and gang head barracks by 2005. The Corps will then continue to build barracks so all Marines will be housed at the two-man per room assignment standard. The Corps is also dedicating maintenance of Real Property funding to eliminate the backlog of facility repairs to barracks by 2004. Furnishings are also being replaced on a whole-room basis and at a faster replacement cycle. For family

housing, the schedule is to replace or repair our core family housing inventory by the OSD goal of 2010. This and minor deficit reductions are being pursued using both traditional and creative financing mechanisms. In addition to housing, a commitment to excellent MWR and other Marine Corps Community Service programs and workplace quality improvements will be instrumental in recruiting and retaining our Marines. We will maintain this commitment to quality of life infrastructure improvements through the collective leadership skills and managerial abilities resident in the operating forces and the Supporting Establishment. This commitment to our people will result in improved readiness and ensure an excellent Supporting Establishment for future generations of Marines.

### *Marine Corps Position*

The Marine Corps has a long range plan and specific goals to provide an economical infrastructure. The goal is to minimize redundancy and improve our training capabilities while providing the necessary quality of life features and environmental stewardship of the Corps' resources. Marine planning objectives are manifested in its vision of an infrastructure unparalleled in capability and efficiency to support America's expeditionary force in readiness.